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ABSTRACT

Attitudes of 277 faculty members about their work were surveyed in 1983. Herzberg and colleagues' theory that work satisfaction stems from the work itself and dissatisfaction from the work environment was also explored. Attention was directed to attitudes toward work, job stress, overall job satisfaction, and chief job satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Specifically, consideration was given to work demands (such as class load or research opportunities), working conditions (such as adequacy of facilities or class size), and rewards and appreciation (such as salary and recognition for good teaching). The chief source of satisfaction for the respondents was student growth, followed by personal growth and intellectual stimulation. Working conditions that enhance the life and work of a faculty member--a flexible schedule and autonomy in the classroom--were highly valued. Dissatisfactions arose from working conditions, including poor facilities and equipment, inflexible or heavy teaching schedules, lack of recognition, low salaries and high amounts of bureaucracy, and student and colleague apathy. Information on the characteristics and background of the faculty respondents is included. (SW)

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COLLEGE FACULTY AND JOB SATISFACTION

A
Paper
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College Faculty and Job Satisfaction

This is a report of a study of college and university faculty and their attitudes toward their work. It is part of a larger study of faculty opinion about their work and occupational commitment, family, parental, and marital satisfaction, and personal life and self-esteem currently underway at the Institute of Higher Education Research and Services at The University of Alabama. Only the attitudes-toward-work portion of the study is reported here.

Purpose

This study was designed to identify faculty opinion about their work. It also purported to examine the theory of Herzberg and others[1] which holds that work satisfaction stems from the work itself and dissatisfaction from the work environment.

Procedures

In the Spring of 1983, 277 faculty in nine institutions of higher education in a southeastern state participated in a study of attitudes toward their work, job stress, overall job satisfaction, and chief job satisfactions and dissatisfactions.

The faculty surveyed had these characteristics (see Table 1).

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[1]Frederick Herzberg and others, The Motivation to Work (2d ed.), New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1959.

Table 1
Selected Characteristics of 277 Faculty Members

Item	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Type of Institution:		
Junior College	131	47
Senior College	146	53
Ethnic Background:		
Black	60	20
Caucasian	180	67
Hispanic	1	less than 1
National American	24	9
Oriental	4	1
Gender:		
Female	139	50
Male	138	50
Place of Birth:		
Alabama	160	63
Other States	84	33
Foreign Countries	10	4
Age:		
25-34	53	19
35-49	146	53
50-64	69	25
65+	7	3
Marital Status:		
Married	199	72
Single	77	28
Number of Children:		
None	63	24
1	51	20
2	82	32
3	45	17
3+	19	7

Table 1 continued

Item	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Educational Level:		
Bachelor's degree	23	9
1 or 2 years of graduate work	11	4
Master's degree	45	56
Doctor's degree	79	30
Employment Status:		
Part-time	11	4
Full-time	240	88
More than 1 job	20	7
Other	2	less than 1
Salary:		
Below $15,000	27	9
$15,000-19,999	83	30
$20,000-24,999	82	30
$25,000-29,999	51	19
$30,000+	33	12

Academic deans at these nine colleges or universities were contacted and all granted permission, indeed, gave encouragement to include their faculties in this study. Faculty members volunteered their time (about 60 minutes) to respond to a 167-item instrument which was administered at each of the institutions. After the study and the questionnaire were explained to them, only those faculty who wished to participate in the study did so. The questionnaire dealt with faculty attitudes toward (a) their work, (b) marriage and family, and (c) their self-concept as well as demographic data. This report deals only with the responses to the questions on the work of faculty and demographic information.

Institutions in this study included two predominately black and seven predominately white; three were private, six public; four were

This strong positive response to their work was amplified in a number of different ways.

Faculty expressed affinity for their jobs (Table 3).

Table 3
Q83 How do you like your job?

Response	Number	Percent
I love it	112	41
I like it	144	53
I am indifferent to it	6	2
I don't like it	9	3
I hate it	3	1

Faculty indicated they liked their work--and liked it most of the time (Table 4).

Table 4
Q84 How much of the time are you satisfied with your job?

Response	Number	Percent
All of the time	26	10
Most of the time	193	70
About half of the time	34	12
Occasionally	18	6
Never	4	1

Compared with their neighbors and friends, faculty determined that they probably enjoyed their work more than others (Table 5).

Table 5
Q86 How do you like your job compared with other people?

Response	Number	Percent
No one likes his job better than I like mine	27	10
I like my job better than most people like theirs	158	58
I like my job about as well as most people like theirs	82	30
I dislike my job much more than most people dislike theirs	5	2
No one dislikes his job more than I dislike mine	1	less than 1

Even on the possibility of changing jobs, faculty adhered to their current career choice (Table 6).

Table 6
Q85 How do you feel about changing your job?

Response	Number	Percent
I would not exchange my job for any other	16	6
I cannot think of any job for which I would exchange my present job	110	41
I am not eager to change my job, but I would do so if I could get a better job	128	48
I would take almost any other job in which I could earn as much as I am earning now	7	3
I would quit this job at once if I could get anything else to do	5	2

This question does not ask if faculty could change jobs (reality) but gives the respondents an opportunity to fantasize--can they imagine circumstances under which they might or would change jobs. Almost half

did not consider the possibility of moving at all; another large group (48%) would contemplate changing jobs only if it meant something "better."

Further evidence of strong positive feeling about their work came in faculty responses to two other questions: are you satisfied with your work as a career? would you choose your work again if you had the opportunity to remake your decision?

In Table 7 data show faculty responses are very positive toward their work and exhibit a high degree of satisfaction.

Table 7
Q164 I am very satisfied with my college work as a career

Response	Number	Percent
Agree strongly	117	44
Agree	105	40
Undecided	22	8
Disagree	16	6
Disagree strongly	4	2

High satisfaction with their career choice is also a characteristic of college faculty (Table 8).

Table 8
Q165 I would again choose to work in a college or university if I could remake my decision

Response	Number	Percent
Agree strongly	148	57
Agree	74	28
Undecided	31	12
Disagree	7	3
Disagree strongly	1	less than 1 percent

Every person faces problems on their job. What feelings do faculty have about various aspects of their work? A series of questions gave

faculty an opportunity to identify the degree to which they perceive elements of their work as problems or job stressors. Attention was given to work demands (such as class load or research opportunities), working conditions (such as adequacy of facilities or class size), and rewards and appreciation (such as salary and recognition for good teaching).[1] Faculty responses are presented in Tables 9-11.

Table 9
Qs15-21 How much of a problem do you find work demands of your job?

Factor	Not a problem	A minor problem	Some problem	Quite a problem	A major problem
Class Load	126(47)	53(20)	52(19)	17(6)	21(8)
Long Hours	108(40)	64(24)	56(21)	24(9)	18(6)
Preparation Time	98(36)	75(28)	57(21)	18(7)	22(8)
Committee Work	88(33)	73(27)	60(22)	29(11)	18(7)
Red Tape	69(26)	59(22)	66(25)	36(13)	37(14)
Time for personal study	54(20)	43(16)	69(25)	51(19)	53(20)
Research Opportunities	52(19)	53(20)	76(28)	34(13)	54(20)

( ) = percentages

Time for personal study (39%), research opportunities (33%), and red tape (27%) were three factors identified by faculty as being especially significant problems for them. Conversely, even these items were found not to be a problem, or at least minor, for large minorities of their colleagues.

Given in Table 10 are faculty responses about their working conditions.

[1]Ibid, p. 43.

Table 10

Qs22-32 How much of a problem do you find working conditions of your job?

Factor	Not a problem	A minor problem	Some problem	Quite a problem	A major problem
Student motivation	60(22)	73(27)	86(32)	30(11)	22(8)
Faculty attitudes	76(28)	80(29)	71(26)	29(11)	17(6)
Responsiveness of administration to problems	63(23)	90(33)	61(22)	27(10)	31(11)
Intra-faculty relations	111(41)	78(29)	55(20)	14(5)	12(4)
Faculty participation in policy decisions	74(27)	68(25)	63(23)	32(12)	34(13)
Amount of information you receive from official sources rather than from the grapevine	78(29)	81(30)	51(19)	31(11)	28(10)
Adequacy of facilities	71(26)	72(26)	65(24)	34(12)	31(11)
Opportunities to attend professional meetings	66(24)	65(24)	66(24)	42(15)	32(12)
Class size	152(57)	66(25)	36(13)	8(3)	6(2)
Freedom and independence in work	196(72)	45(17)	20(7)	7(3)	4(1)
Intellectual stimulation among colleagues	111(41)	74(27)	43(16)	30(11)	14(5)

( ) = percentages

Freedom and independence in work (89%), class size (82%), intra-staff relations (70%) and intellectual stimulation among colleagues (68%) were highly rated aspects of working conditions. Opportunities to attend professional meetings (27%), faculty participation in policy decisions (25%), adequacy of facilities (23%), responsiveness of administration to problems (21%), and amount of information you receive from official sources rather than from the grapevine (21%) were viewed as the most troublesome problems.

What about appreciation for college teachers? and rewards? Faculty opinions on these issues are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11

Qs 33-39 How much of a problem do you find appreciation and rewards in your job?

Factor	Not a problem	A minor problem	Some problem	Quite a problem	A major problem
Status of profession	125(46)	69(26)	40(15)	25(9)	11(4)
Emphasis on research	105(39)	60(22)	53(20)	27(10)	23(9)
Student appreciation	149(55)	65(24)	42(16)	12(4)	2(-)
Recognition for good teaching	104(39)	64(24)	52(19)	19(7)	30(11)
Appreciation for personal contributions	103(38)	66(24)	53(20)	17(6)	31(12)
Promotional opportunities	83(31)	61(23)	51(19)	23(8)	51(19)
Salary	56(21)	62(23)	72(27)	36(13)	42(16)

( ) = percentages

None of the factors in Table 11 was viewed by a majority of faculty as a major job stressor; indeed, a majority were of the opinion that these

factors were only minor problems or no problem at all. Of those factors identified as problems, salary (29%) and promotional opportunities (27%) headed the list.

Taken as a whole, 20 percent or more of the faculty respondents identified 9 of 25 items (see Tables 9-11) as "quite a problem" or "a major problem" (see Table 12):

Table 12
Factors Selected as Significant and Insignificant Problems

Factor	Percent Selecting Factor as "Quite a Problem" or "A Major Problem"	Percent Selecting Factor as "Not a Problem" or "A Minor Problem
.Time for personal study	39	36
.Research opportunities	33	39
.Salaries	29	44
.Red tape	27	48
.Opportunities to attend professional meetings	27	48
.Promotional opportunities	27	54
.Faculty participation in policy decisions	25	52
.Responsiveness of administration to problems	21	56
.Amount of information you receive from official sources rather than from the grapevine	21	59

Even among these factors, it should be noted, sizable proportions of the respondents did not view them as a problem or only as a minor one (see Table 12). The data in Tables 9-11 and Table 12 show most faculty

view very few factors in their work as significant problems. Countering those who identified certain factors as problems, equal or greater numbers of faculty are of an opposite opinion--that no problem exists or it is minor in nature. Generally, faculty responded favorably toward their work, working conditions, and the elements of appreciation and reward attached to their work.

The survey questionnaire encouraged each faculty member to volunteer information about those aspects of college teaching which provide, for him or her, the most satisfaction or dissatisfaction (see footnote on page 4).

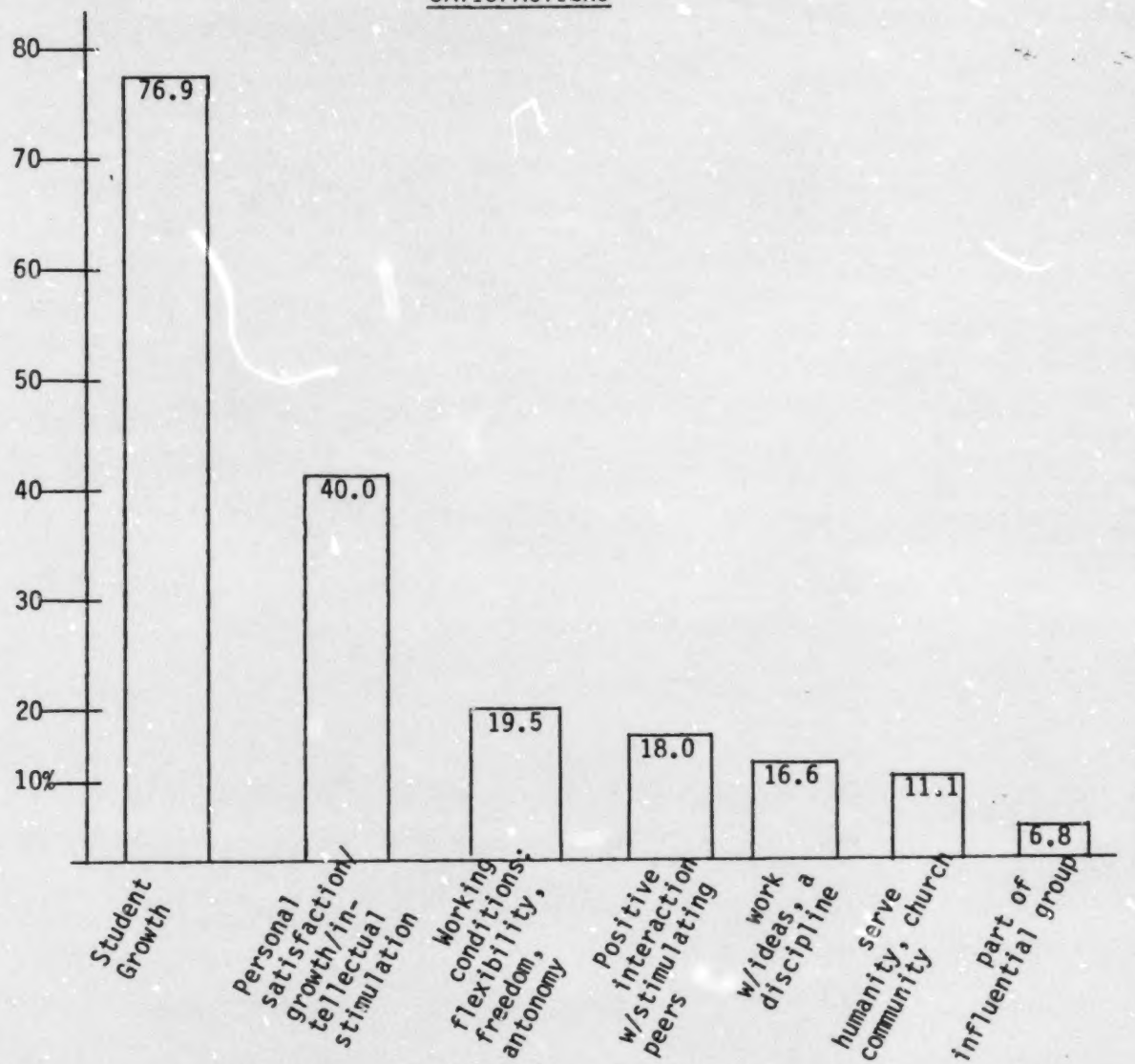
When given this opportunity, faculties were quite clear: seeing and supporting student growth was by far the chief source of their satisfaction. Almost eight of ten faculty declared interaction with students and having the opportunity to have some impact on their lives is their principle joy.

Strongly held, too, were the positive possibilities in their work for the realization of personal satisfactions and growth and opportunities for intellectual stimulation. The exercise and use of the mind and an environment for the development of the whole person, mind and body, were key elements of the satisfaction of faculty. Third, those conditions surrounding the work which enhanced it--flexibility of schedule, freedom to manage and develop one's work as a college teacher, the autonomy to make major decisions about one's teaching; all these were significant, too (see Figure 1).

Less powerful determinants of job satisfaction were positive interactions with stimulating peers, the ability and opportunity to work within the arena of ideas, especially the arena of an academic discipline, the opportunity to serve humanity, one's church or community by college teaching, or being part of a prestigious and influential profession.

Figure 1

Summary of Factors Identified by Faculty as
Chief Satisfactions from College Teaching



Those factors chiefly responsible for dissatisfactions with their work, the respondents noted, had to do with the circumstances surrounding their jobs. Job conditions including equipment and facilities and teaching schedules were viewed as major contributors to job dissatisfaction. Closely allied with those factors were personal items such as the lack of recognition for professional achievement, lack of time for personal and professional development, a heavy work load, and salaries (see Figure 2).

Other factors causing dissatisfactions were red tape and bureaucracy, apathetic students, and apathetic colleagues.

Other negative factors mentioned were job stress, institutional and public respect and support, and departmental goals.

A further indication of high faculty job satisfaction: 213 of the 277 respondents in this study voluntarily named student growth as a major work satisfaction; 111 noted their own personal growth and intellectual stimulation. Only 71 of 277 named the top ranking major dissatisfaction (job conditions), 69 gave reasons in the second category of personal conditions, and 64 listed salary (see Figure 2). Again, faculty demonstrated a strong overall positive attitude toward their work.

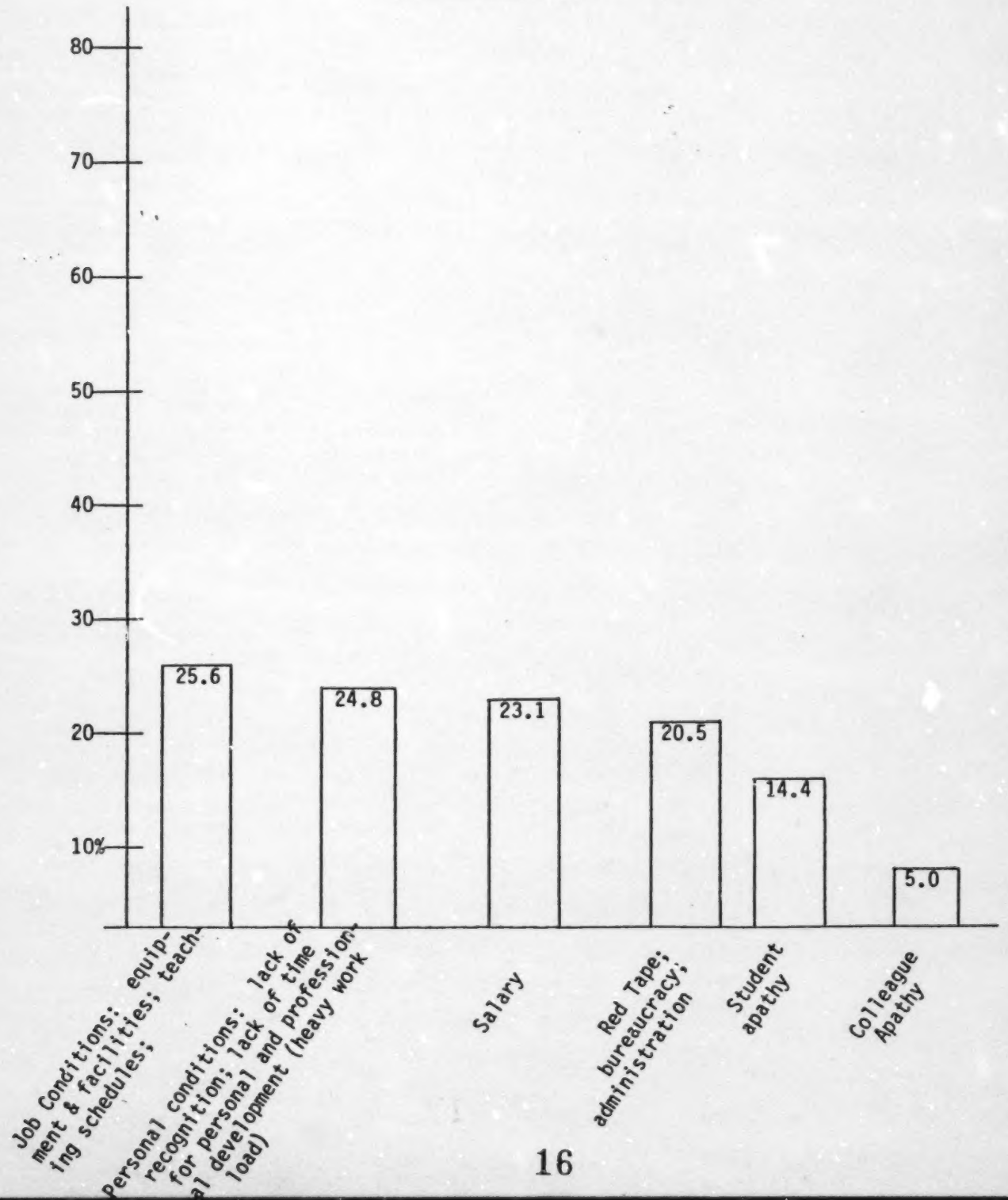
Discussion

How satisfied are college faculty with their jobs? Buffeted by the decline of higher education in the esteem of the public, financial crises on every hand, the lowered capabilities and numbers of entering students, to name only a few aspects of a stormy educational scene, the health of higher education--the work setting for faculty--in the United States is suspect.

More specifically for faculty, the handsome salary and compensation increments of the 1960's have washed away in waves of inflation. Inroads

Figure 2

Summary of Factors Identified by Faculty as
Chief Dissatisfactions From College Teaching



by unions and collective bargaining agreements in higher education signal a heightened concern for job security, working conditions, and a faculty voice in policy making. Further, the labor market for faculty has crumbled away to almost zero and net additions to the academic work force could remain at or near that level for the remainder of this century.[1]

Given this depressed state of higher education, how do faculty feel about their work? With perhaps a quixotic gleam in their eye, they say they like it very well.

- Faculty view their work as a career, not simply a job.
- They are happy with their work . . . and most of the time.
- They feel they like their work more than other people like theirs.
- They do not wish to change jobs.
- They identify some problems in their work but for every problem noted greater numbers of their colleagues suggest that this same factor is not a problem.
- Far greater numbers of faculty find satisfactions from their work than those who find dissatisfactions.

Are faculty in American colleges and universities naively unaware of their work situations? If aware, do they blithely rationalize away the problems they face, so enamored of their work they simply ignore negative factors? Or is the professional life of a faculty member high in benefits and low in stressors--a life satisfying to most of its practitioners?

Other studies confirm that, historically, U. S. faculty have espoused positive feelings of good will and enthusiasm toward their work. The life and work of a faculty member is not one of lowly station; it is a position of social esteem, of professional honor, of personal fulfillment. The work

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[1]Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, Three Thousand Futures, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980, see pp. 296-318.

of a college or university faculty member is attractive to many who see in it a way to encourage and advance human learning. They are attraced to a world of ideas and their articulation and exploratien. They are attracted by the great amount of authority they have over the conduct of their own professional affairs; relatively few judges appear as one engages in the routine of teac ing, research, scholarly activities, and service projects.

Further, a great deal of self selection must take place as persons approach the college teaching profession. Years of study at undergraduate and graduate levels give prospective faculty more than a passing glimpse of the virtues and scope of this profession. They see, indeed, experience the difficulties and pleasures inherent in the complexities of teaching and learning. For those who appreciate the essential solitude, autonomy, and intellectual demands of faculty life--this may be the life they seek.

Many faculty come to the profession with a fairly well developed understanding of the job requirements and demands and the constellation of values, rewards, and limitations enveloping it.

So, the work of college and university faculty must be seen, by themselves at least, as more than simply a way to earn a living or a platform on which to stand only long enough to ready oneself to pursue other interests.

The work is intrinsically worthy. It advances one's growth as a human being and supports the growth of others. It receives long-term commitments from its practitioners. Problems encountered in the work environment are perceived as minor. Thus, this study sustains a long line of research which shows that, in good times and bad, college faculty do enjoy their work.

Yet, even in this case where benefits are high and stress is low,

the work of college and university faculty is not without its detractions. What are the stress points? the areas of dissatisfaction?

Traditional concepts of worker satisfaction include the notion that more or less of a particular work feature produces greater or lesser worker satisfaction. For example, if a worker's satisfaction is raised by an increase in salary, an additional increase will result in even higher satisfaction. This ignores worker expectations, the complexities of human motivation, and has proven not always to be a feasible assumption.[1]

Herzberg's work challenges this traditional notion of worker satisfaction by suggesting that not all factors have the same consequences in human behavior. Certain factors which he views as motivators spring from performance of the work itself. The worker attains a sense of personal growth and achievement, a feeling of happiness and satisfaction from the achievement and recognition of achievement derived from the job per se.

Other factors make workers unhappy. Conditions surrounding the work (e.g., compensation, working conditions, administrative practices), even if they are supportive of the work and the worker, tend to simply prevent or avoid dissatisfaction. These factors Herzberg labeled "hygiene." The hygiene factors, those extrinsic to the job, tend to cause worker dissatisfaction.

Thus, Herzberg's position is often known as the "two-factor" or "dual factor" theory of job satisfaction.

Although this theory is not supported by all studies or researchers in the field of job satisfaction,[2] it is a most important conceptual construct and one well publicized in the literature.

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[1]Arthur Cohen and Associates, Community Responses to Community Needs, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975, pp. 133-143. See footnote on page 1.

[2]Ibid., p. 139.

A secondary purpose of this study was to test the dual-factor theory: do faculty receive job satisfaction from one set of factors, job dissatisfaction from another?

The evidence here is very clear. They do.

A reexamination of Figures 1 and 2 quickly bears this out. By far the chief satisfier among college faculty is student growth, a primary goal of most higher education faculty. Second is personal growth and intellectual stimulation. Third, those working conditions which enhance the life and work of a faculty member--a flexible schedule, autonomy in the classroom--are highly prized.

Following closely in order were factors such as the interaction with stimulating colleagues and the intellectual challenge of a discipline. Serving one's church or community and being part of an influential and prestigious group were also satisfying motivators.

The thrust of these satisfactions was the work of a college teacher. Working with ideas and a discipline, engaging in intellectual discourse with peers and students, an environment enriched by certain conditions of freedom and flexibility, all for the purpose of supporting and encouraging student achievement--these were the heart of faculty happiness.

Dissatisfactions sprang from working conditions. Poor facilities and equipment, inflexible or heavy teaching schedules which prevented personal and professional development, lack of recognition, low salaries and high amounts of bureaucracy and red tape, student and colleague apathy; these factors prevented faculty from fully exploiting the potential of their work.

Table 12 displays an array of faculty dissatisfactions. Not having enough time for study or opportunities for the research and scholarship

necessary for good teaching along with low salaries, too much red tape, and lack of opportunities to attend professional meetings were major items of discontent.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study shows faculty exhibit a strong degree of satisfaction with their work. Many factors prompt enthusiasm for their career choice. Very few work factors are perceived as problems or job stressors.

Faculty do receive their major satisfactions from the work itself. Those work characteristics which are least satisfying come from the job environment.

Given this optimistic and positive response by faculty, colleges and universities, even in these times of public criticism and financial reverses, have a reservoir of good will in their midst.

How can these positive attitudes be continued? enhanced? expanded? Certainly those factors most closely allied with high faculty satisfaction can be identified and cultivated. Ways can be found to support faculty efforts to further student growth and their own. A comprehensive institutional plan of faculty support and growth can be built on these foundation understandings of faculty satisfaction.

What of the negative side? Institutional leadership and faculty together should address these factors. Inadequate equipment and facilities, lack of recognition, salaries, red tape are prominent among those factors which are identified and can be altered. They are not immune to change. Institutions can do no less than be sensitive to job stressors and work toward their eradication or amelioration.

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College Faculty and Job Satisfaction

Thomas Diener -- The University of Alabama

Abstract

This paper presents the findings of a 1983 survey of 277 faculty in nine postsecondary institutions in a state in the southeastern U.S.A. The purpose of the study was to elicit faculty judgments about their commitment, stresses, and satisfactions in work and family life. This report presents data only about the respondents and their work: their job and its stressors and job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

The study revealed that faculty derive high satisfaction from student achievement, their own intellectual growth in a discipline and the world of ideas, working under flexible and relatively autonomous conditions, and association with stimulating peers. Their chief dissatisfactions dealt with job conditions (equipment and facilities, inflexible teaching schedules), personal conditions (lack of recognition, heavy teaching load), salary, red tape, and student and colleague apathy.

A secondary purpose of the study was to test Herzberg's two-factor theory of job satisfaction. These respondents did verify Herzberg's thesis: generally workers derive satisfaction from the work itself; they are dissatisfied by factors external to their work.